

PUBLIC WORKS PROJECTS MOVE AHEAD WITH THE PEOPLE'S TRANSPORTATION PLAN



It happens every school year. Motorists unknowingly speed through school zones, putting students' lives in danger.

Such is the case at Kinlock Park Elementary School, where motorists often speed by the school without realizing they're driving through a school zone.

"Careless people do not realize that there is a school here and that children are getting out of cars and crossing the street," explained Ana Casas, principal at Kinlock Elementary School.

However, this is changing. In July, the Miami-Dade County Public Works Department began installing school flashing signals to let motorists know they need to slow down.

This is just one of the many improvements to be provided as part of the People's Transportation Plan (PTP). Under the PTP, significant transit and public works improvements are occurring throughout the county, all funded by the half-penny transportation surtax approved by voters in November 2002.

Countywide, there also are plans to do work on sidewalks, including adding curbs near bus stops to make them accessible for people with disabilities.

Currently, the County is working with the City of Hialeah on a \$5.5

million road-improvement project along NW 62 Avenue, from NW 105 Street to NW 138 Street. The project includes drainage and subgrade work. This is one of several road-improvement projects the County's Public Works Department will be working on until 2013.

In addition, road-improvement work along Grand Avenue in Coconut Grove is expected to break ground in August. This project, which is estimated at \$3.7 million, will be funded in part by the PTP sales surtax, and other funding sources from the City of Miami and the County.

Thanks to PTP funding, the County also is hiring staff and acquiring equipment to accelerate the process of replacing faded street signs countywide. Under this initiative, street signs are being replaced at a rate of about 70 intersections a week.

"With a master schedule in place, and staff working at a quick pace, we should be able to implement all of these countywide improvements sooner than the 10-year proposed schedule," said Miami-Dade County Surface Transportation Manager Dr. Carlos Bonzón.

Aside from replacing old street signs, the County is also working on implementing a pilot program that would make it easier for

motorists to read street signs. As part of the Street Name Sign Pilot Program, which could be implemented as early as September, florescent street name signs, such as the ones seen in Palm Beach County, would be installed on steel mast arms. Each intersection would have four illuminated signs.

Thus far, there are 16 sites throughout the county slated to get these fluorescent new signs. The sites were selected based on the mast arms' capacity to accommodate the additional weight of the illuminated signs.

Moreover, to ease traffic flow, the County's Public Works Department is working on improving the synchronization of all traffic signals throughout the county. To do so, the County will install a new state-of-the-art, traffic-management system that will replace the 29-year-old traffic control system. The new system will have the capability of controlling and monitoring all 2,600 traffic signals in Miami-Dade County, as well as any future signals that may be added to the system.

For more information on the People's Transportation Plan, call 305-884-7567, Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. or visit www.trafficrelief.com



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